

## 2nd Sunday after Epiphany [c] - January 18, 2004 (A Sermon by Rev. Ron Friedrich)

Gospel lesson: JOHN 2:1-11

<sup>1</sup> ...there was a wedding in the town of Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there,<sup>2</sup> and Jesus and his followers were also invited to the wedding.<sup>3</sup> When all the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

<sup>4</sup> Jesus answered, "Dear woman, why come to me? My time has not yet come."

<sup>5</sup> His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you to do."

<sup>6</sup> In that place there were six stone water jars that the Jews used in their washing ceremony. Each jar held about twenty or thirty gallons.

<sup>7</sup> Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled the jars to the top.

<sup>8</sup> Then he said to them, "Now take some out and give it to the master of the feast."

So they took the water to the master.<sup>9</sup> When he tasted it, the water had become wine. He did not know where the wine came from, but the servants who had brought the water knew. The master of the wedding called the bridegroom<sup>10</sup> and said to him, "People always serve the best wine first. Later, after the guests have been drinking awhile, they serve the cheaper wine. But you have saved the best wine till now."

<sup>11</sup> So in Cana of Galilee Jesus did his first miracle. There he showed his glory, and his followers believed in him. (*New Century Version*)

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### SERMON

John 2:

Now a marriage happened in the city named CANA in the country named GALILEE on the third day. And Jesus' mother went to the wedding. Jesus and HIS friends also received an invitation to the wedding. Happened the wine was-all-gone...

...and you know what happened next. Jesus changed water into wine.

The Bible says that was Jesus' first miracle. But that is a strange miracle.

Later we will see Jesus  
 heal sick people,  
 give life to dead people,  
 feeding hungry people,

and calming storms for frightened people.  
But... ?make more wine for a party, where people are already drunk?

Strange.

And the wine Jesus made was a good wine, better than any wine already served in that party.

Why?

We know only a little-bit about that wedding party.

When we have a wedding, we normally have a short party afterward. Sometimes we serve only cake and PUNCH. Sometimes we serve full dinner.

But in the time of our Bible story, people had wedding parties that continued for almost a week! The family of the groom was responsible to provide enough food and drink for their family and friends during that week.

Expensive? Yes!  
Require careful planning? Yes!

But if food or drink ran-out [all-gone], that can be very embarrassing to the groom and his family.

And that is exactly what happened at the wedding in CANA. They ran out of wine.

Back in those days, they did not have a variety of drink to serve. Only water and wine.  
Water is not party drink. (And clean drinking water was not always easy to get.)

They didn't have Coke or 7-Up or Dr. Pepper.

Could they serve grape juice? Remember, they didn't have refrigerators. They didn't have glass jars or plastic bottles. They got grape juice only when they harvest grapes. Then soon the wine becomes sour vinegar, or if they put the juice in special leather bags, named WINE SKINS, they can keep the juice a long time... after it becomes wine.

How Mary got involved with serving food and wine for that wedding party, we don't know. But we see Mary has information the party manager not-yet have. The wine is all-gone.

Mary asks her oldest son, Jesus, for help... to-do what? Go buy more wine? Maybe that is the reason Mary told Jesus about the problem.

Jesus' answer to Mary is very strange. *"Woman, what is MY business to you? MY time is not-yet here."*

And also strange, Mary accepts that answer!

What does that sentence mean? *"My time is not-yet here."*

That means two things:

First, it means that Jesus already knows about the problem and He already has a plan -- a plan to help Mary and her friends. And Mary is satisfied with that. From-now-on Mary will not worry about it.

Second, Jesus uses that sentence, *"My time is not-yet here,"* a few more times in future years, and each time that sentence grows with special meaning.

The real purpose for Jesus coming to earth as a human man was not for doing miracles, but for dying on the cross.

The real purpose for Jesus coming to earth was not for saving a party HOST from embarrassment, but for saving us from hell.

Comparing:

Jesus already knew about the problem in the wedding, and He already had a plan to solve the problem.

In the same way:

When Jesus came to earth, He already knew about our sin problem, and He already had a plan to solve that problem.

For solving the problem about the wine, Jesus used something very simple: Water. Not clean drinking water, but washing water.

For solving the problem about our sin, Jesus used something very special... Himself.

The Bible says that Jesus shed-His-blood for us on the cross, to wash us clean from all of our sin. *[1 John 1: 5-9]*

And to help us often remember the price Jesus paid for our salvation,

Jesus also offers us wine to drink

-- and with that wine Jesus gives us His blood.

Jesus offers us bread to eat

-- and with that bread Jesus gives us His body.

And in the Lord's Supper, we taste a little-bit of the great wedding feast that God now finished prepared for us in heaven. That great

party will happen for Jesus Himself, and His marriage to the Church.

Back in our story in CANA, the party manager told the groom:

*"People always serve the best wine first. Later, after the guests have been drinking awhile, they serve the cheaper wine. But you have saved the best wine till now."*

That is also true for us. In our lives, we try to enjoy everything the world offers us. But all that never really satisfies, and we learn the world's pleasures quickly run-out (all-gone).

When we finally look to Christ, and trust Him, He provides us with true meaning for our lives. We learn true joy in knowing Christ. And we look future for pleasant fellowship with Him that will never run-out.

Amen.